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Up and Down

ELIZABETH JESSUP BLAKE

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TO

J. T. A. and R. L. A.

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"WITHIN AND WITHOUT"

It took Without to make Within a heaven,
For though Within held all men's treasures safe,
Without, at first, was tantalizing, mild;
All blue, with clear far reaches spaced with clouds
Or interrupted by a mountain screen
That tempted—"Up and climb and look beyond!"
With such a rival four straight walls seemed gloom
And it was then Within was but a room.

And then Without grew restless, sighing, wild;
Dark banks of grey shut in from mountain's crown
To low surrounding hills a strange new world;
The air was filled with war songs; rain like whips
Wielded by fury winds, relentlessly
Lashed down on trees and fields and homes of men
Who hurried in, made fast against the storm,
Then looked about them slowly, till they saw
Their lamplight shining on the driven rain—
And heaven was bounded by a window pane.

SOULLESS BAYDREEAH

Soulless Baydreeah am I,
In the khan on the lonely hills
I live with the sheikh and my son
And a faith that kills.

Mohammedan fellahin,
We live by the fruit of our toil
And I am yoked with an ass
To plough the soil.

Mohammed says men have souls
But women, Ajellak Allah!
What! souls for beasts, for the wife
Of a poor fellah?

Yet I long for a soul! for a soul
Like the calm of a Lebanon night
When the hills sleep in mighty content
In the pale starlight,—

No, the hills are a rolling waste,
The mountains are naked despair,
Up, reaching up for their souls
In age-long prayer.

And soulless Baydreeah am I,
Glad to live for the sake of my men,
Plodding from morning till night,
Then plodding again.

IN A BEDOUIN'S GARDEN

Old Age in her faded garments,
With her back to the glinting sea,
Sat among flaming poppies,
Under a leafless tree;
Budding Spring sang round her,
Round her and you and me.

O Spring, and you, Old Old Woman,
You are ancient, silent, and wise,
And you work with a wordless patience
And smile far back in your eyes;
But, Spring, you are young as the poppies!
And red as their petals that fall
In the wind from the orange garden
With its watch-tower on the wall.

TO A WEEPING BIRCH

NEVER as a trusted mast for a straining sail
Shall you hear the seaman's song, shouting on the gale;
Never stretch from wall to wall, as oaken rooftrees go,
Guarding seamen's homes from harm while the tempests blow.
Never have you seen the sea, nor watched the skimming sails—
Lone you stand all silver white, shining through your veils.
Woodland Vestal, raising high suppliant arms to heaven,
Do you sigh, "Be merciful—naught to me is given"?
Naught but dreams and fancies fleet tangle in your drooping veils,
Stars and dewdrops glisten there when the daylight fails.
Woodland Vestal, sigh and sigh—raise your arms to heaven—
Sigh for purest happiness all to you is given;
Souls despondent, looking up, glory in your loveliness—
Beauty leads to heaven.

ONE OF LALAGE'S LOVERS

My lyre sings high,
High sings my lyre,
My heart would fly,
My thoughts go higher,
My heart is bound,
My thoughts are free,
I gave all but my thoughts
To Lalage.

THE WILFUL SPRITE

I PIPED to you on the pipes of Pan
At the edge of the woods at the edge of day,
You came, you danced, a touch—, you ran—
Or changed to a quivering balsam spray.

I piped to you on the pipes of Pan
At the edge of the woods, at the edge of night,
You came, you danced, a touch—, you ran—
Or changed to a shimmer of pale starlight—.

I piped to you on the pipes of Pan
When over the trees came the dawn's faint glow,—
Were you in the breezes that whispered and ran?
Must you ever come dancing, only to go?

TO DOGWOOD BLOSSOMS

Lifted on wandering, sweet-scented airs,
Pale clouds adream in your woodlands awaking
Aloof from the world and its manifold cares,
Your beauty is innocent witchery, making
A song writ in petals, a page of delight,
Bird-songs in flower notes wistful and white!

SNOW TREES

The frosty wraiths of fairy-fingered trees
Stoop down to touch the hurried passer-by
With heaven's whiteness. And the awe-stilled breeze
On soundless wing so softly passes by
It is as though an angel breathed a sigh,
And earth-bent man lifts up his head unknowing
Why suddenly new thoughts are in him growing.

SHEPHERD'S NIGHT SONG

In the fold that I built with my hands
Safeguarded by bowlder and thorn
Huddle my sheep with their lambs asleep,
From sunset till early morn.

On a mountain-top lone is the fold,
Its doorway faces the sea;
There do I sit while the black bats flit
And the winds and the stars rove free.

There do I sit with my dog and fire,
My fire, my dog, and the sky,
While mystery fills the valleys and hills
And sighs through the pines near by.

STARLIGHT IN SYRIA

WARM is the breath of night with heat of day;
Horizon line alone cuts the still blue
Of sea's dark shadow from its canopy
Embroidered all with stars as thick as bees
That overswarm a clover field in June.
And almost like the very voice of dark
Rise mingled sounds of nature, ringing sweet:
Full-throated choruses of froggy choirs
And for an undertone the song of sea
Languishing, rippling, murmuring, musical,—
For the lone sea is hushing off to sleep
Its little waves, and sweetly near at hand,
The garden's width away, a cadenced drop
Into the brimming Oriental pool
Makes for the sleeping roses, lullaby.

And while the breath of night is hot with day
And while Orion seeks to bow him low
To lose himself beneath the western rim
Of the sea's shadow, still thine heart and hear.
List how the concerts of a thousand frogs
Choiring in unison antiphonal
Do bid us note, as suddenly they end,
How night is still, yet rich as memory
With beauty set in silence, sung in sound,
And hushed to quietness through harmony.

X Y Z

WHEN grapes and figs are honey-ripe
And cactus fringed with spiny pears,
When golden melons tempt the knife
Then eat and drink, forget your cares.
Cares are the kin of hungry hours
When wine is bitter and the dry bread sours.

THE SHEPHERD'S FLUTE

THERE drifts the dust-white flock across the hill,
The sun-baked hill whence heat waves tremble high
From cracked, red earth to blur the glaring sky;
In listless sleep the parched world gasps, but still
My heart rests cool, as by some shaded rill;
For, 'spite of hot Sirocco's gusty sigh,
Tasting a plaintive happiness am I:
Sweet sympathy with hearts that love the trill
And inquiry of soft, high notes let slip
To fall and ripple out in minor key,
A reverie that makes all hearers mute.
That music is the golden wine I sip,
And for each drop of purest melody
I thank thee, Shepherd, and thine humble flute.

ZAHLEH

Oh, land of dreams, whose upward winding paths
Lead out a wilding through the hedgerows old,
Past bending reapers and the broadening swaths
Of Autumn's harvest ranked in lanes of gold,
Past tented vineyards redolent of wine
Where raisin makers, chanting endless runes,
Spread luscious banquets for the glowing sun,
Who, month by month, smiles gloriously benign,
While softly to herself all nature croons,
While gnat and bird and bee enrich her tunes
And God and man and nature are at one.

LIBNAN

(Lebanon)

You who have lands you love know well the pang
That calls you homeward from your wanderings
To seek a well-loved path, to see one tree,
To look down well-remembered, hallowed lanes,
And if you may not heed the call, then God
Has given to exiled man that treasure ship
For homeward seeking souls, dear Memory.

So in your love of homeland hear my song
And peace of Lebanon shall rest you long.

Libnan—!

You hold your children wheresoe'er they go,
Though worn and broken in the smoke and mire,
Where clustering city stacks make country winds
Sick with the reek of fevered industry,
Though aliens hemmed about with poverty,—
Still in their eyes there burns a kindly fire—
Their hearts are held in spell where'er they go.

Your strangers, too, you hold in that same chain
That binds and links the sturdy Libanese,
That draws them back to rocky paths again
From North from South, from mighty lands of Wealth
In every stage of dearth, success, and health;
Though they go far, back to your mother-knees
They come or long to come. You hold them so.

Since brown Phoenicians tracked the "sail-winged sea"
With silver wakes all interlaced with foam
When Empires through kaleidoscopic maze
Sought to enthrall you with their laws and ways,
Your charm bewitched them till they called you—Home,
And when they left you 'twas reluctantly.

O Lebanon! Great David's Greater Soul
Cried out in love to your eternal calm
That, resting like God's Sabbath on Sunnîn,
Unburdens souls of care and hearts of fear,
And as the Soul goes where the eyes have seen
And God to mountain lovers seems more near
So, heirs of Lebanon's unmeasured balm,
Keep sweet that quiet strength and keep it whole!

Where'er you live—for you are spread so wide
There is no nationality nor trade,
No ocean, lake, or sea or countryside
That knows you not—for wanderers were you made!—
Where'er you live, O high-born Libanese,
Think well.—Have you not heard—have you not seen:
The sighing of wild olive in the wind,
The Januaries when the hills are green?

The stony river beds that pave the rough
Deep sweep of valleys where the jackals hide,
The dust that sheep with busy little feet
Raise thickly on the road and down the street
That leads through some mud village where the doors
Stand hospitably open, and the sweet
Hot fragrance and the oven's pattering din
Make passers-by long for the loaves within?

And think again.—Think how the shepherd calls
And graceful answers come from all the walls—
No stranger he, nor anyone at all,
For man is man as such to stand or fall
You know, in Lebanon in field or mart
Men trust the intuition of the heart.

Think—no, not think, but breathe it once again—
Breathe the pure air alive with daily news
Of Zihri's dinner, Hadda's parching corn,
Zareefy's winter store of sun-curled figs

Or drying okra; taste the pungent sweet
Of bran-filled air that blows in from the wheat
Khalil is tossing with his trident prongs,—
And oh, give ear and heart and hear the songs—!

The songs of Lebanon are whispering still
Eternal unfulfilment, inquiry,
Sung by each shepherd to the listening hill
And sung by lonely hills to such as thee:
Songs every loyal heart remembers still,
So sweetly plaintive, souls in quest, they sing
In starlight with the crickets in the dark,
A living lulling rhythmic music,—Hark!

* * * * *

Fresh from the lips that last drank from the spring
Which cold as high Kunaiseh's snowy crown
Foams from its rocky cavern and then flows
Carrying rugged life and gracious green
Along its narrow banks till lost in sand—
Fresh from your kinsman's lips may fall that boon
Greater in worth than all of Ophir's gold.
Ask for a song, a song of old Libnan,
And press the reeds into his willing hands
And bid him play and hush the room to hear.

And in the night however far away
You shall grow solemn with your memory,
For o'er the wall the mountain boys shall peep,
Then bolder grown, shall mock the shepherds' call
Soon smothered by the dust-cloud of the sheep;
As by long habit, over the mud wall
Will show a wistful face, half veiled in white
That gazes steadfastly along the road
To where the valley takes it. And you know
She faces toward the sunset with the hope
That that great hungry West that took her dreams
Along with you, may send her back a Man.

A man to make the hills at one again,
A man too big for prejudice of race,
A man to give Libnan her rightful place
Among the other mother-lands of men.

O Lebanon, Great David's Greater Soul
Drew strength to think of God from mountain height,
Keep all your children toiling for that goal
Exalted through the ages, till the might
Of lofty consecration to the God
Worshiped e'en blindly where your cedars spread
Shall bring your sons back from the foreign soil
To grow with you and spend their ardent toil
Not only in the fair exchange for gold,
But building finer laws and making true
The prophecy that Loyalty shall bless,
The wilderness shall blossom as the rose,
And Lebanon be ruled in nobleness.

GLAUCON TO THESBIA

Poppies are red,
Skies overhead
Blue as a turquoise
Sungilded. Fled
Are clouds of despair.
Smile to me,
There!
See how that poppy
Shines in your hair
Smile, there,
Once more!
Why do you pore
Solemn and sad?
The world lies before!

ON THE HEIGHTS. 1915

Rose and grey and billowing white,
Mists roll in from the sea,
Drifting in under sunset light,
Shutting the world from our mountain height,
And while the hills are lost in shroud
We are the kings in a world of cloud.

Silently watch while the vanishing sun
Withdraws his glory and gold
Leaving the cloud heads one by one
Till it sinks to rest, and the day is done
And, through the fog sea, soft and slow,
Rings a sunset bell from the world below.

SEA FOG

SOUNDLESS surf on a homesick shore,
Billows that gather your forces and rise
To break without foamy crest or roar
Under the moonlit skies,
Tenuous inlets and still, white bays
That engulf and enshroud the hamlets and trees,
Is there a longing that guides your ways,
You ghosts of inland seas?
Haunting the hills with your soft embrace
Do you, wraith of a sea, make the mountain's dream
That the floods of old have returned to their place
Once more to plash and gleam?
Silvery mists on abandoned shores
Nature, adream at her artistry,
Has left the mountains sad no more,
With pictured memory.

NOLI TANGERE

Follow the fleeting vassals of the morn,
The rose-winged motes that cluster but to fly—
Even as they flame with Sun's resplendent dye—
And, gilded, melt to azure airs, whence born
Are the sweet wingèd moments of the thorn:
Those woodland prayers no ear nor human eye
Could understand. Theirs is such privacy
As only rudest, blindest heart would scorn:
One dewy hour with petals open thrown
To woo the passing breeze and bumbling hum
Of furry banded bees that love to own
The honey of the thorn-rose; till they come
He treads on sacred ground who early wakes
All breathless lest he lose the transient charm
And seeks the brier rose amid the brakes
Before the weaving gnat with drowsy swarm
Rises in answer to the blue fly's horn
That starts the day and ends the early morn.

TO A WILD ROSE

All the blush of the dawn and the sunset's last touch of farewell,
All the hope of the Spring and a hint of the Summer's bright gold
Folded away in your petals of exquisite flame
With the spiciest fragrance a flower was given to hold.

ODE TO LONELINESS

They have not known you who berate you so,
They have not chosen you as friend to know,
Sweet winsome maid that haunts the hilltop crags
And gives the distant view a keener thrill,
Companion spirit on the wild-rose hill,
Why do men paint you as the queen of hags,
Fit only to invest yourself in rags,
Gifted the soul with fear and dread to fill,
Potent to drive to madness and to kill—?
Such know you not. I seek you where the flags
Sway in the cool rush of a mountain spring.
I find you smiling ere the sunrise stains
The soft grey wings of dawn. Your silence reigns
At even when the mists rise from the plains.

Vainly men crowd to touch dear Beauty's dress;
Would you know beauty, then know loneliness.

ZEST

LIFE, thou art for the living;
Not for scorn
God made the bulbul
And the whistling thorn;
Not for such dark repining
All the play
Of light and shadow
On a cloudy day.
He made the hills for laughter,
Not for gloom,—
And valleys
That the rivers might have room
To dance and run
And wander into bays,
And trees for happy shelter
On the ways
That lead from home to labor,
Then to rest.
Life, in thy fullest living
Thou art best.

HAPPINESS

Some say 'tis common, found where homes are true;
Some call it Youth, and others, silver grey,
Call it—"the sunset glow at end of day,"—
And others look as if they wish they knew,
As though in walking through their fields of dew
Someone had gone before and dashed away
The pearly grapes from every elfin spray!
Tell me, are they who know of her so few?

KING DAVID

His childhood knew the loneliness of hills,
Grey hills that flushed to fire-opal glow,
Or softened under vines, grew white with snow,
Or laughed in rippled gold of windswept grain,
Or roared with avalanche beneath the rain.
He knew the valleys where the wild folk go;
He knew the sweet mad loneliness of hills,
And mornings with the earliest birdling's strain
His heart sought mountain ridges whence the plain
Seemed but a patched cloak sewn with silver thread
And swiftly, now, his pathway upwards led—
Till all about him stalked the giants grey,
The guardian rocks that on the hilltops stay.
And there he rested him aloof and still
And God sent loneliness his heart to fill.

SPRING IN NEW YORK CITY

For sheer sweet beauty
Give me trees in Spring!
Then prayer is instinct in the human breast
When every twig a dreamer lies at rest
Among its infant leaflets that so cling
In waxen newness, as the moist new wing
Of any butterfly.
You guessed that green
On yonder boxhedge row,
That flush of maple boughs is but a glow—
Nay, Spring has worked her miracle again,
Made sacred every street or park or lane
That has a budding tree, or growing thing;
For sheer sweet beauty, give me trees in Spring.

WIND DRIFT

And all about me in the street, a crowd
Of faces hovered, wondering, longingly;—
How like fair, lilting butterflies in cloud
Driven by land winds out upon the sea,
Seeking to reach the fast receding lee
Of some high vessel merchantman, as proud
As any galleon with its gleaming shroud
Flung to the winds; those winds that cruelly
Toss the sweet golden motes of living light
Now up, now down, in headlong ecstasy
Till, tired of wing, they long to cease their flight.
Shores, masts, are far away,—below, the sea.
The wind fails, down they droop,
Sweet living light!
Lost in the sated ocean's depth of night.

BEDOUIN LULLABY

The clouds sleep on the high grey hill,
And the sea in silver sleeps;
An eagle soaring high and still
Watch in the noon-tide keeps;
The sun forgets that in the West
In the West is his journey done.
He sleeps aloft in the white hot sky,
Sleep too, my restless one.
Soon the winds of the afternoon
Will sing to the high grey hill,
Soon the sea will dance for thee,
Then thou shalt run at will;
But all the world must dream and rest
While the sun hangs asleep on high,—
Wait for the waking wind of the West
Then, my little bird, fly.

A HILL ARAB

My feet have loved the rough rock road,
My hands, my knife so keen;
My heart has loved the far and near
And the valleys in between.

My brow has loved the fresh wet wind,
My lips the kiss of rain;
My eyes have followed the vulture's flight
Across and back again.

The spices that Sirocco blows
From dust and shrub and pine,
And the drenching dream of sunlight, fill
My brain like thrilling wine;
My black goats dance and I skirl a song
On this double reed of mine.

SYRIA

FLEE from memory. Canst thou?
Leave thy children dreamless.
So shall they reap rich fruits—
The fruits of gold in foreign soil.

Ghost of beauty—haunting us!
Hand stronger than a mother's calling voice,
Leave thy children dreamless—
Haunt them not with beauty fairer than reality.

Mirage! yet warmer than a beating heart,
Dull the sunny haze that hangs over the market place—
Still the drowsy chime of camel bells keeping time to the shuffle of camel's feet—
Thy children dream: . . .

Thy mountains lift winsome pines, each with its treasured dot of shade,
And through the olive groves sheep feed slowly, led by a song.
It is the song that haunts us. A song keeps thy children dreaming.
Above the stranger-city a vision is carried in a song—Syria!

MEMORIES

A Hilltop.

WIND and sweet-scented sun and golden bushes,
Wind that made symphonies in sweeping rushes
Through sighing pine and tattling sassafras
O'er floes of rock adrift in seas of grass.

Dawn.

A SPIDER thread held both my hands
I was a prisoner, I knew,
Yet I was stung to nimbleness
By ice-cold pricks of trodden dew.
The breeze pulled slyly at my hair,
A sunbeam flashed across my eyes—
And all at once I was aware
That Fairyland around us lies.

Beirût—1917.

THE plain is still—
Down curve the slumbrous hills;
The fountain brim
With langorous music fills
The clear soft dark;
The crescent moon distills
Her magic light,
And it is night.

OCTOBER

Sing not in plaint the changing hour
From bud to blossom and to fading flower
As though there were no beauties left to sing
After the moment of the Spring!

The rich dark line of moist boughs gracefully
Lifts through the garlands of that loveliness
That we call Autumn; for each Summer tree
Before she tosses off the leafy dress
That would be cumbrous in her winter sleep,
When snows must wrap her in their clinging white
While she prepares the ever new delight
Of next year's Spring;—each leafy Summer tree,
Not thinking Spring were all, but Life is all,
Makes merry her farewell to laughing play
And will not toss her fol-de-rols away
Without this last display—
Even the most gaunt casts clouds of opal glow
About her, and the age-old dignity
Of change lends quiet to the waiting air.
Oh, winds be still, lest one flake of the fair
Rose-petaled, prodigal gold and opal dream
Fall from that Maple bending to the stream,
Anew the heart is caught in sweet dismay
Lest such exquisiteness be swept away.

WIND FLOWERS

We are old as the mountains,
Our race is undying,
By road or field furrow our colors are set—
But, young as the sunset glow
Fleeting and flying
Our petals ephemeral none may forget.

When the snowdrop hangs sweetly
Contented and lone
And the hyacinth blue gives her fragrance for naught,
Anemones people the hills as their own
And flaunt with narcissus a beauty unsought.

Men take us and break us;
One moment they cherish
Our fragile wild beauty of fragrance and form;
But rather than uselessly sicken and perish,
Plucked up—to be tossed away—
Give us the Storm.

The Storm is our brother
The breath of the spaces
The soul of all motion unfettered and lone,
And we are incarnate of colors and graces,
The essence of dreamings of wind-weathered stone.

See, all through the time of our budding and blowing
The wind murmurs softly and musingly low,
He speeds with his zephyrs the bees in their going
And reverent breathes o'er our fragrance, till Lo:—

He sees we are fainting, we are not immortal
And rather than witness us sicken and fall,
Wide open he flings every azure-bound portal
And turbulent thunder-clouds answer his call.

They trample us down and they bury us under
With march of the heavy rain, steady and grey,
They strive to make Earth, with their drumming and thunder,
Forget that she once lived so laughing and gay.

But we die for the space of a moment of sleeping,
Quiescent we thrive on the storm-driven rain,
We gather our strength till its bounds are past keeping
And soon all the Earth is a-flower again.

We are old as the mountains,
Our race is undying,
By road or field furrow our colors are set—
But, young as the sunset glow
Fleeting and flying,
Our petals ephemeral none may forget.

THE ANSWER

SEEK not for Poetry!
'Tis but a flash of light
Through petals shining,
'Tis but a thing of spirit
Past divining.
Seek not to find her soul.
Be great. Since first man thrilled
To all the God in Nature,
God has willed
That only with much labor shall men see
The Vision that He guardeth jealously,
Hiding His treasures with the surest hand
Where men look daily,
Yet may never understand.

FOR A FAIR LADY'S BURIAL

SHROUDED in pearly beauty,
Flushed as a rose, new blown,
Keep her, forever perfect,
Locked in the living stone.

So, with the eyes of my spirit,
Till earth draws its last long breath,
As I saw her lovely in sleeping
May I think of her, lovely in death.

SCOTCH BROOM

As though burnt out and faded, the hot sky
Curves high and ever whiter, whiter hot
To where the sun, at his most cruel noon,
One glowing heart of fire, blazing burns.
And all the world that has no tree or rock
To shade it o'er is still and parched and dry;

But near me bends an oak to frame the sky
With dark and prickly shade, and near its root
Spread up and out long fingers green and cool
All gemmed with gold. Sweet, fragrant yellow flowers!
Your brightness has no heat, no blighting powers,
But purest color mixed with fragrance rare
Lends balm to hills more feverish than fair.

THANKSGIVING DAY

Our lips give thanks for senses gratified,
For all our wants that labor hath supplied
Aided by Thine increasing bounteousness,
Yet in our hearts there moves a vague distress;
Distress of soul that cries out to believe,
That yearns for faith and finding none, doth grieve;
That finding none will not believe naught found,
So, like a cagèd bird pursues its round.
God, in our unbelief for Thee we seek,
And in unworthy hearts we pray Thee speak.

THERE IS NO TIME

GIVE to the winds your sighing,
They will take it and whirl it away;
Give to the gulls your crying
As afar they go flying, flying—,
On pinions of silver grey.

Give to the foam your drifting,
The drifting of aimless despair;
Hark to the song uplifting,
As down from the sky come sifting
The snow-flakes on Christmas air.

Work, till your hearts firm founded,
Wakened from blinding sleep,
Trust in a Love unbounded,
Peace that has all surrounded,
There is no time to weep.

MY THOUGHTS

WESTWARD they fly,
Soft breezes blow the birds across the sky
And fleets and archipelagoes of cloud
Drift on the outspread wings of soaring wind;
Trees stretching tingling fingers wide and high
Make clear-cut shapes of lacelike tracery,
Each one a masterpiece worked by the blind
But deftly moving fingers of the Spring,
That magically weaves old Winter's shroud
Into a robe of loveliness, to cling
About the hills and down the vales to lie.

Westward they fly,
Following fast the golden shreds that sun
Has painted with the purest tints of fire.
'Tis Easter evening, calm the rivers run
Down the broad valley. From a pointed spire
Rings a slow bell. From every marsh and pool
Sing scores of tiny voices, eager, high;
The springtime chorus; frogland's singing school
Is with whole-hearted joy taking the cool
And sedgy shallow for its evening choir.

And darkly rise the pines, and blue the hills;
The West grows greyer, edged with points of light,
One tiny bird its evening songlet trills,
The grass is dainty with its "bluets" white.
The sun's bright fire is lost in vaporous grey,
The islands of the sky like dreamlands lie,—
My thoughts go with the sun where it is day,
Westward, to where the West is East, they fly.

THE BEECH TREE VALLEY

THERE is a valley, very calm and still,
And, when you listen, musically low,
The rippling chuckling laughter of the rill
Lost down there, makes the breezes lighter as they blow.
All through the valley breathes a wild woods spell
Wafted and woven in among the trees,
Who stand like children with a dream to tell—
Tip-toe and eager—catching for the breeze
That lightly through the valley sighs and plays
And moves the mist of twigs and branches so
That to the eyes it seems to weave a maze
Of wintry loveliness and sunset glow.
Grey beeches in the Valley of the Dreams,
A little mountain brooklet lost to sight
And singing to itself, almost it seems
God took the simplest things of earth to-night
And made Himself the purest song of praise
That ever can be sung through all this old world's ways.